



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR**

## **DC Immigrant Justice Legal Services Grant Fund FAQ**

The Immigrant Justice Legal Services (IJLS) grant fund is a Bowser Administration initiative to benefit the DC immigrant community. The fund will support programs that provide services and resources to DC immigrants and their families, ensuring that all DC residents continue feeling safe and at home.

### **When is the Request for Applications (RFA) being released?**

The RFA was released on January 25, 2017.

### **When are applications due?**

Applications are due on February 21, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. EST.

### **When will grant winners be announced?**

Award notifications will be released between April 1, 2017 and April 10, 2017.

### **Is this federal funding? Where is the money coming from?**

The \$500,000 comes from local DC funds. These are not federal dollars, but dollars that we raised in the District. The money is being reprogrammed within the Executive Office of the Mayor.

### **What sorts of projects are eligible?**

The grant will fund a wide range of programs that promote immigrant justice. These programs are:

1. Help DC residents apply for green cards, convert green cards to citizenship, and make other affirmative USCIS filings;
2. Renew DACA applications and work permits for DC residents;
3. Conduct Know Your Rights briefings and workshops;
4. Help prepare asylum applications and provide legal representation at asylum interviews and/or hearings for DC residents;
5. Represent DC residents in deportation proceedings;
6. Protect financial assets and custody for DC children when their parents/guardians face potential deportation;
7. Help people and businesses conduct affairs through ITIN numbers, appeal licensing board denials based on international qualifications, and access health insurance and other public benefits for which they are eligible;
8. File any lawsuits that may become necessary to challenging the use of DACA applications for finding or deporting undocumented persons;
9. Help file applications for S, T, U, Special Immigrant Juvenile visas and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) petitions for DC residents or family members of DC residents; and
10. Provide legal help for family reunification efforts for families with at least one DC resident; and
11. Help DC families adopt or provide foster homes for refugees and children from war-torn countries.

### **Does the work have to be new? What if I want money to continue providing current services?**

As long as your work falls into the listed IJLS categories, you are welcome to apply. The funds are meant to supplement, not supplant, current funding, however.

### **Do I have to form a partnership if I want to apply?**

No, being involved in a partnership is not a grant requirement. However, partnerships between law firms/legal service organizations and nonprofit organizations are highly encouraged, as we hope to encourage more lawyers to volunteer to help our Washington, DC residents and their families. We therefore hope that you will consider joining forces with other organizations or firms, allowing you to expand your impact.

### **Is this program only for Latinos? Or for Asian and Pacific Islanders?**

No, the IJLS is for all DC immigrants, regardless of nationality. About one in seven residents of the District of Columbia is foreign born. The program is for all of them, and their family members that they hope to reunite with, as well as to help D.C. families if they seek to adopt or foster children from war-torn countries.

### **Who can apply?**

IJLS is open to (1) community-based 501(c)(3) organizations; (2) private entities that are partnering with 501(c)(3) organization(s); or (3) private entities that are mobilizing pro bono talent. Individuals are not eligible for this grant. This grant is for nonprofits, private entities and partnerships that will provide legal services to DC residents and their families. If you require individual services, we encourage you to contact the grant recipients that receive IJLS funding and can meet your needs.

### **How do I apply?**

Please follow the application process that is outlined in the RFA. You can find the RFA on the Mayor's Office on Asian & Pacific Islander Affairs (<http://apia.dc.gov/>); the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs ([www.ola.dc.gov/](http://www.ola.dc.gov/)); the Mayor's Office on African Affairs (<http://oaa.dc.gov/>); the Office of Documents and Administrative Issuance (<http://os.dc.gov/>); and the District's Grant Clearinghouse.

### **How many grants will be awarded?**

The Executive Office of the Mayor expects to award up to 20 grants.

### **Can I apply for more than one grant?**

Each organization can only apply for and receive one grant. If further funding becomes available, the Executive Office of the Mayor will notify potential applicants through the usual channels.

### **What happens to cases or applications when the grant money runs out?**

Consistent with the norms of legal ethics, grant recipients must complete all cases or applications that they undertake. This commitment is a condition for receiving the grant.

### **I may not be able to apply, but still want to get involved. Can I?**

If you represent a law firm, and cannot apply for the IJLS or do not receive a grant, you can become a Pro Bono Partner. Pro Bono Partners commit to providing services that fit one - or more - IJLS program areas. In exchange, they will receive recognition on our website and invitations to IJLS events.

If you are an individual attorney, you can help DC immigrant-serving organizations on a pro bono or volunteer basis. To find good opportunities, you can register on the IJLS website. Once you do, CBOs across DC will be able to contact you when they have relevant opportunities.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/new-americans-washington-dc>